

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for considering the present application. In the Office Action dated October 14, 2004, claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments above. Applicants have amended the claims to clarify the activation level is the inflation rate of the external airbag.

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Cho* (5,646,613) in view of *Stopczynski* (6,519,519).

Applicants have reviewed the *Cho* and *Stopczynski* references. In claim 1 the activation level has been changed to inflation rate to clarify the invention. The Examiner points to the discussion of 1 to 1,000,000,000 samples per second is processed by the computer (at Col. 3, lines 21-46, Col. 4, line 48 to Col. 5, line 20, and Col. 7, lines 4-28). This is a rate for processing samples of data and not a rate of deploying an airbag. No teaching or suggestion is found in the *Cho* reference for deploying an airbag. Also, the Examiner points to the *Cho* reference for an object classifier. Although different types of objects are mentioned, Applicants can find no teaching that a classification of such objects is classified. The *Cho* reference merely states that these objects are recognized and that a closing distance to these objects may be determined. The *Cho* reference merely figures a time to impact rather than an inflation rate. As is mentioned in the current application, changing the inflation rate may be desirable for distinguishing various types of objects or various types of objects versus a pedestrian.

The *Stopczynski* reference also fails to teach or suggest different inflation rates for an external airbag in response to an object classification.

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Cho* in view of *Stopczynski* in further view of *Strumolo* (6,687,577). The *Strumolo* reference is not available as a reference in that the *Strumolo* reference is a §102(e) type reference and was assigned to the same corporation, Ford Global Technologies, LLC. Therefore, Claim 4 is also believed to be allowable.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all objections are now overcome. Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance and expeditious notice thereof is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Please charge any fees required in the filing of this amendment to Deposit Account 06-1510.

Respectfully submitted,



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